

THE BATHS AT BUXTON.

THE builders have commenced their work here. The old buildings have been cleared away, and the "Natural Wing" (so called from the waters famed for their medical properties issuing from the limestone in the immediate vicinity of the Crescent, at an unvarying temperature a little above 84 degrees of Fahrenheit) is rapidly progressing. The baths are being erected in two distinct buildings, the "Natural Wing" and the "Hot Wing," separated by the crescent and St. Ann's Hotel, and comprising, on the ground floor of the buildings, private and public hot medicated baths, cold plunging baths, douche baths, men and women's charity baths,—the latter specially devoted gratuitously to the accommodation of the afflicted poor by the desire of the owner of Buxton—the Duke of Devonshire. The style of architecture selected is Italian: fountains and sculpture are promised. In the rear of the "Hot Wing" building a garden of considerable extent is provided. Two different modes of construction have been recommended by the architect, Mr. Henry Currey, involving the use of different materials; the "Natural Wing," of the stone of the neighbourhood; the "Hot Wing," of iron and glass. Both buildings will be covered with the ridge and furrow roof. The houses in the crescent are undergoing alterations, and the approaches to the new park have been commenced. Messrs. Sanders and Woolcott, of London, are the contractors for the works. The laying out of the park is in the hands of Sir Joseph Paxton; and commodious villa residences are to be erected on the site with a view of affording additional accommodation to those gentry who resort to Buxton, not only on account of the virtues of its hot springs, but the surrounding country. This enterprise is being carried out at the cost of the Duke of Devonshire.

THE ARTISTS' BENEVOLENT INSTITUTION DINNER.

THE anniversary dinner of the Artists' Benevolent Institution, held on the 3rd inst. at the Freemasons' Tavern, was presided over by Lord Carlisle, and was eminently successful: the muster, too, was larger than usual, and included many leading painters, sculptors, and architects. We made no list at the time, but may mention as occurring to us Sir Charles L. Eastlake, Sir Walter James, Sir W. Ross, Sir C. Barry, Messrs. Cockerell, Uwins, Roberts, Leslie, Hardwick, Fowler, R. Chambers of Edinburgh, Angell, Creswick, S. Lahee, E. W. Cooke, Mann, Penrose, Weekes, D. Wyatt, Denham, Godwin, Evan Thomas, F. Pickersgill, Bellamy. Lord Carlisle's address was polished and elegant, as his addresses always are. In the course of it he said,—

"Not to mention the changes of taste and the caprices of fashion, you must know well that it comes within the range of probability, nay, often within the range of your own experience, that the cold grasp of disease will paralyse the fingers that have shed their witcheries over the glowing landscape, and banded down to distant ages the lineaments and features of those who are most renowned and most endeared to us—the fingers that have fixed the fleeting traits of character, worked out the mysterious treasury of passion and feeling, breathed life into the glowing marble, and in the service of our solemn temples, our glittering palaces, and stately halls, have rendered architecture the fitting framework and sister of the other arts. You know well that time when age dims the eye, and dulls the fancy at the sudden touch of disease—when the failure of the nerves, and all the other incidents to which flesh is heir, have prevented the cunning of the hand from giving any longer effect to the glowing conceptions of the brain. I take up the paper which has been placed in my hands to-day, and I find among the dry details of this institution, many items calculated to impart to it a deep and affecting interest. I find that during the year just past, the society has relieved 63 cases, involving an expenditure of upwards of 800*l*. Among the recipients of your bounty I find "a distinguished artist," "a highly talented artist," "the widow of a miniature

painter," "the widow of a landscape painter," "an architect and draughtsman," "the widow of a portrait painter," "the daughter of an historical engraver," and many others of the same class, who have been relieved as far as the means of the institution would permit. As to the toast which I last proposed, "The Army and Navy," you are aware that for the shattered limbs and declining years of our naval and military veterans this country has provided noble and costly receptacles to shield their declining years; but you are also aware, and I say it not as a matter of complaint, but of fact, that for the votaries of art, the peaceful votaries of the fine arts, no such provision is made. Painting has not her Chelsea, sculpture and architecture have not their Greenwich. They may be employed during their years of health and vigour in commemorating deeds of valour, and in transmitting the lineaments and forms of successful conquerors to distant ages. Alexanders may still draw after them their Apelles in their train; but with respect to the fine arts, for sheltering their broken fortunes they must rely, not on nations, but individuals,—not on the public, but on their patrons,—not on England, but on you."

The appeal was not made in vain: the subscriptions amounted to about 560*l*. It is an admirable charity, well deserving extensive support.

THE PARIS EXHIBITION OF MODERN ART.

THE jury of selection have this year exercised great strictness in the examination of works sent for admission, a sort of reaction on the proceeding of the preceding year. The result is most serious to individuals, but will probably be useful to art. Out of 3,500 works of art sent in, 1,757 (half) have been admitted. These consist of 1,280 pictures, 270 statues, busts, &c. 66 architectural works, 98 engravings, and the remainder are lithographs. Foremost amongst the pictures stands one by Horace Vernet, an episode in the last expedition against Rome. The sky is dark and cloudy, with a single hand of light on the edge of the horizon. About the middle of the picture, a small fort, half ruined by the bombardment, reflects the last rays of that sun which so many men will never see again. On the right, flashes of flame and masses of smoke show the combat raging. In the foreground are a number of groups full of animation. *Tièbre dans l'île de Caprée*, by M. Gendron; *Les Honneurs rendus aux Comtes d'Égmont et de Horn*, by M. Gallait; two pictures from the New Testament, by M. Landelle; *L'Inondation*, by M. Antigua; and *Un Ange Déchu*, by M. Yvon, are amongst the pictures which are well spoken of. Amongst the architectural works, few as they are, there are four more designs for the completion of the Louvre. The determination of this question, by the appointment of M. Visconti to carry out his design, will be quite a loss to the architects of France, who have been exercising themselves upon it for several years past. The *Revue des Beaux Arts* says that the Government propose to set up a representation of the intended constructions, full size, at a cost of about 80,000 francs (3,200*l*), in carpentry and painted canvas, so that the effect may be judged of. The precedent has made purchases at the exhibition to the extent of 30,000 francs (1,200*l*).

PREVENTION OF SAND DEPOSITS.—Mr. W. Cole, of Birkenhead, and Mr. A. Holt, have patented an improved method of preventing and removing the deposit of sand, mud, or silt, in tidal rivers, in certain cases, and also in harbours, docks, basins, guts, or other channels, communicating with the sea through tidal rivers, or otherwise, the same being applicable in certain cases to other rivers or moving waters.

WESTMINSTER NEW BRIDGE.—The report of the Westminster Bridge Commission has been published. Having already informed our readers of its resolutions and conclusions, however, it is unnecessary now to repeat them.

ST. JOHN'S GATE, CLERKENWELL.

THE history of this gate, and the priory to which it belonged, has been recently set forth by Mr. B. Foster, the present occupant of the building.* It is the last remaining portal of the monastic buildings once so numerous in the metropolis and its vicinity, and originally formed the grand south entrance to the chief seat in England of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem.

The writer sketches that movement which brought into existence bodies of persons, bumble in their origin, who yet attained a position, and wielded a power, which the church itself bowed to, and royalty readily respected. Following the order from its first formation as early as the year 1048, when a hospital was instituted in Jerusalem by some pious Italian merchants, and a monastery having been attached to it dedicated to Saint John, not, as Hallam tells us, either the Evangelist, or the Baptist; but a certain Cypriot, surnamed "The Charitable," who, in the 7th century, when Jerusalem first fell into the hands of the Saracens, sent money and provisions to the afflicted Christians; but whom, subsequently on the order becoming military, the knights renounced, placing themselves under the tutelage of St. John the Baptist. The monks made it their business at first to devote themselves to ministering to the sick and needy, but through the Crusades, when the profession of the soldier became amalgamated with that of the ecclesiastic, the hospital of St. John became rich and famous, wealth pouring in upon them. No less than 19,000 lordships or manors were in their possession in Christendom alone, and monastic institutions bearing their name were founded in various cities throughout Europe. Their final extinction as the Knights of Malta did not occur till 1795. Consequent on the wide spreading of this order was the establishment by Jordan Briasset and his wife Muriel, about the year 1100, of this hospital at Clerkenwell, which speedily became one of the largest and most important in the metropolis or its environs. The Priory Church was dedicated by Heraclius, patriarch of Jerusalem, in the year 1185, and from this a steady augmentation of wealth seems to have attended it, the importance of the body being greatly increased by the downfall of the Templars, all the lands and revenues of that order being, at a council held at Vienna, 1324, given to the Knights Hospitaliers of St. John the Baptist, called St. John of Jerusalem. But in 1351 Wat Tyler's insurrection broke out, and was attended with disastrous consequences to this wealthy and powerful body. An immense assemblage of persons, on the 13th of June, attacked the Priory, which they fired, and at the same time beheaded the prior, together with the Archbishop of Canterbury and two others on Tower-hill. The work of restoration was, however, soon commenced, but the house was not fully rebuilt till 123 years after, the completion being effected, 1504, by Sir Thomas Docwra, the then prior. It enjoyed its consequence until the year 1540, when the king, Henry VIII., having already destroyed many similar establishments, prompted by the wealth of the order, doomed this to destruction.

Five years subsequent to its suppression the site and precinct of the Priory were granted to John Lord Lisle, for his service as high admiral, the building being preserved so long as the king required, "to be used as a storehouse for his toils and tents for hunting, and for the wars." After his death the Priory Church fell a sacrifice to the Duke of Somerset, the Lord Protector to the king, Edward VI., who, for the purpose of erecting a magnificent palace for himself in the Strand, which he called Somerset House (alluded to in a recent number of this journal), destroyed the greater portion of the buildings, by undermining and blowing them up with gunpowder. It is probable the gate, now standing, would have shared the same fate but from its serving to define the property. Upon the death of Edward VI. and the accession of Mary, the

* The History of the Priory and Gate of St. John, Clerkenwell. Fiskering, Piccadilly.